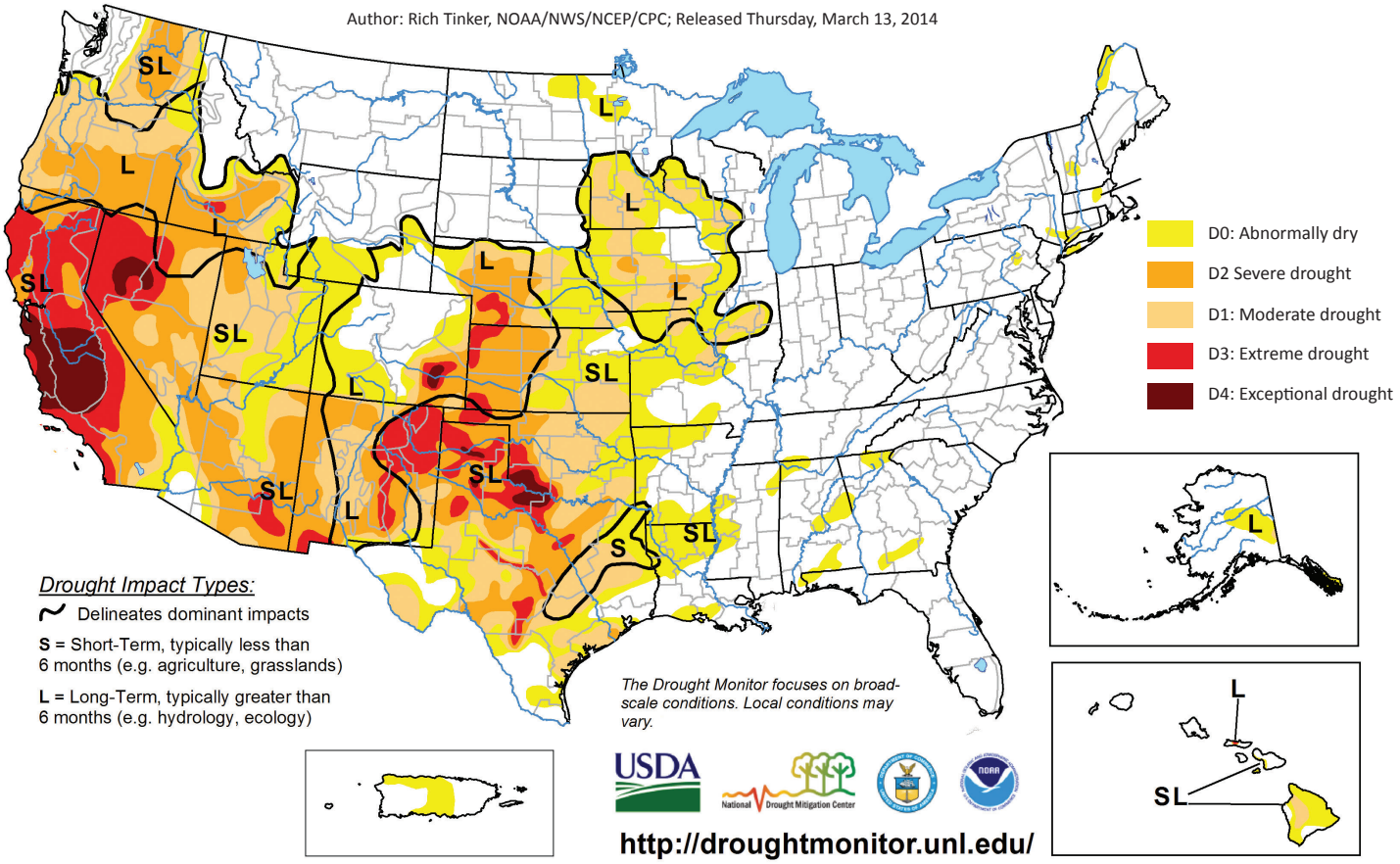
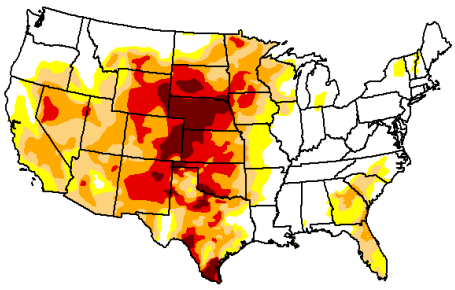
# U.S. Drought Monitor, March 11, 2014

Author: Rich Tinker, NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC; Released Thursday, March 13, 2014




**This week's summary:** Currently more than 35% of the contiguous U.S. is in moderate (D1) to exceptional (D4) drought, in contrast to this time last year, when 51% of the contiguous U.S. was classified as D1-D4. Drought conditions prevail in the far West, especially California and Nevada, with pockets of more severe levels in the Plains states and New Mexico. D4, the most extreme category, covers a bit more than 1% of the contiguous U.S. right now, compared to this time last year when more than 5% of the country was experiencing exceptional drought (D4).

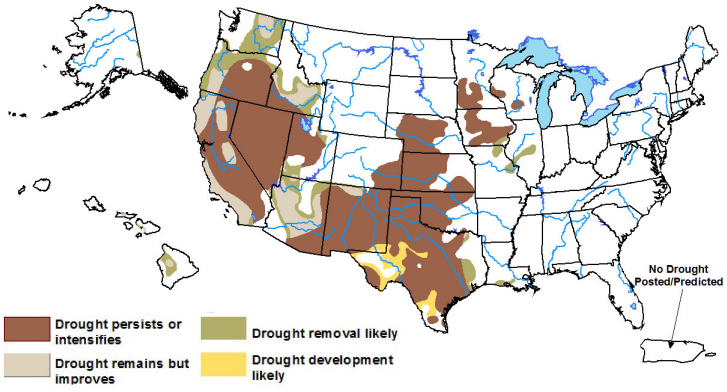
## Looking back: U.S. Drought Monitor, March 12, 2013



At this time last year, about 51% of the continental U.S. was experiencing some degree of drought, with the most intense conditions in the Plains states, and central and southern Texas. Eastern New Mexico, northwestern Nevada and southern California have been undergoing severe drought conditions since then, continuing through today.

## Drought outlook for March, 2014

Released Feb 28, 2014




Author: Adam Allgood, Climate Prediction Center, NOAA
http://www.hpc.ncep.noaa.gov/

The outlook for March shows some easing of conditions in California and Arizona, although serious drought levels will remain. Drought is expected to expand in south and west Texas. Improvement is also possible in central Washington State, northern and coastal Oregon, some parts of southern Idaho and northern New Mexico. The designation of improvement (beige areas) does not imply an end to drought conditions, just a possible easing.

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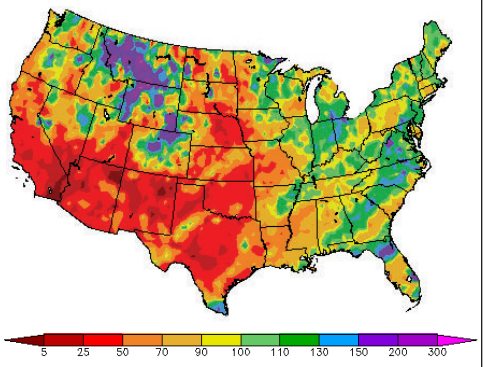
# Water Resources

## Percent of normal precipitation over last three months

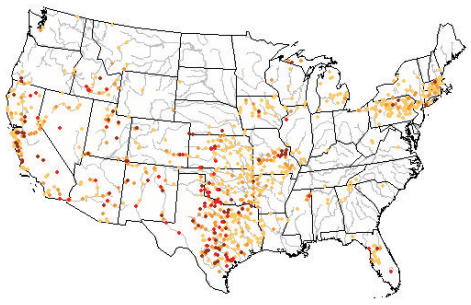
December 10, 2013 - March 9, 2014




Less than half the average of normal precipitation has fallen on the southwestern quarter of the country and parts of the central Great Plains states in the past three months, while in the northern Rockies amounts have been well above average. Most of the East has also experienced above-average amounts of rain and snow, except the coastal Carolinas into Georgia and parts of Florida.

## Below normal 28-day average streamflow

As of March 9, 2014, compared to historic average

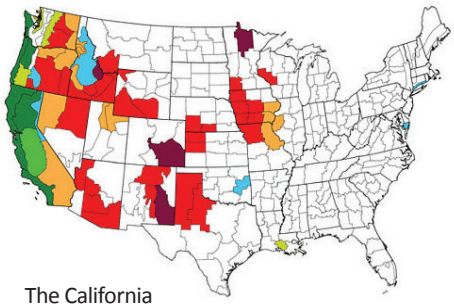


- Extreme hydrologic drought
- Severe hydrologic drought (<+5%)
- Moderate hydrologic drought (6-9%)
- Below normal (10-24%)

As expected, areas of below-normal precipitation are also experiencing below-normal streamflows, particularly California and central Texas, as shown on the map above. Northern Pennsylvania and southern New England are also experiencing subnormal flows.

## Precipitation required to end current drought in 3 months

Between February 1 and April 30, 2014



The California statewide average for precipitation is 8.29" for the three months of February, March and April. Northern and central California would need at least 20 inches or more in that time period this year in order to end the drought, based on precipitation as the water source.

- Trace to 4 inches
- 4.01-8"
- 8.01-12"
- 12.01-16"
- 16.01-20"
- 20.01-24"
- 24.01-49.92"

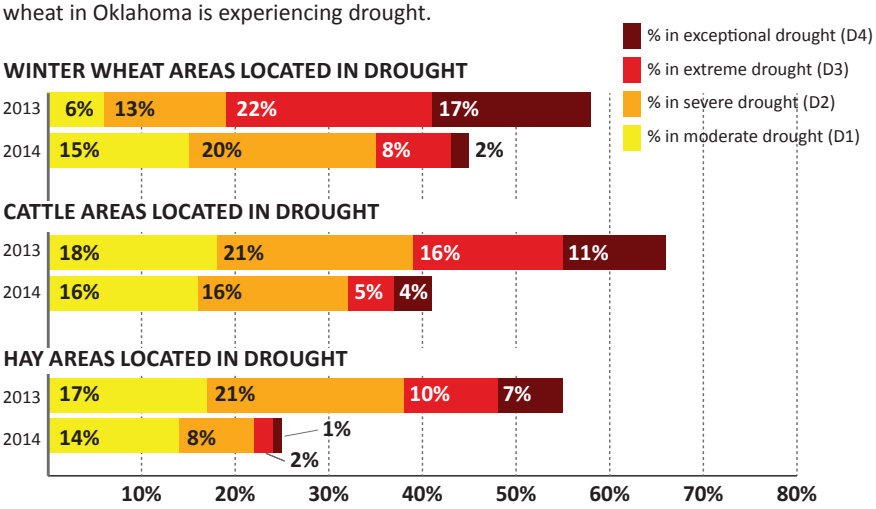
http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/temp-and-precip/drought/

# Agriculture

## Hay, cattle and wheat experiencing drought: A comparison

Last year at this time, virtually all of the hay-producing areas in South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Iowa, Colorado, Wyoming and Utah were experiencing drought. The same was true for cattle in those states, as well as New Mexico, though not Utah. Winter wheat was located in drought throughout Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Nebraska and South Dakota.

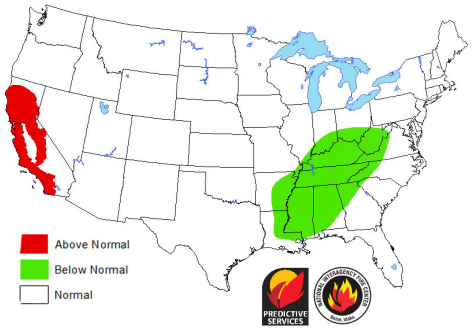
So far this year, the drought's most intense agricultural impacts are in California (85% of hay areas; 92% of cattle; 100% of winter wheat), Washington (82% of hay; 70% of cattle; 70% of wheat); Oregon (96% of hay; 93% of cattle; 99% of wheat) and Texas (71% of hay; 82% of cattle; 95% of wheat). Drought is affecting 86% of the cattle-producing areas in Idaho and 100% of the cattle-producing areas in New Mexico. 98% of the winter wheat in Oklahoma is experiencing drought.




# Fire Danger

## Wildland Fire Outlook

For May and June, 2014




Significant fire potential will continue to be above normal over the southern California mountains and foothills through the spring.

# Outlook Partners

**DOI/Bureau of Reclamation**
www.usbr.gov
**DOI/United States Geological Survey**
waterwatch.usgs.gov
**National Interagency Fire Center**
www.nifc.gov
**National Drought Mitigation Center**
drought.unl.edu
**NOAA/NWS Weather Prediction Center**
www.hpc.ncep.noaa.gov
**NOAA/NWS Climate Prediction Center**
www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov
**NOAA/National Climatic Data Center**
http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov
**NOAA/National Integrated Drought Information System**
www.drought.gov
**USDA/Farm Service Agency**
www.fsa.usda.gov
**USDA/Office of the Chief Economist**
www.usda.gov/oce
**USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center**
www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov

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